

# MICHIGAN LEGWORK

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH

JANUARY 2009

## It's Official! DELEG is Open for Business Department Adds Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency to Focus

### Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm and Director Skip Pruss

announced on December 29 that the new Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth (DELEG) has officially opened for business.

Granholm signed Executive Order 2008-20 on October 27 to streamline state government by aligning all renewable energy and energy efficiency programs together and adding "Energy" to the Department of Labor & Economic Growth's name in recognition of this concentrated effort. Granholm appointed her special advisor on renewable energy, Skip Pruss, as director and as the state's new Chief Energy Officer to oversee the workforce and economic development efforts to prepare for Michigan's new energy economy.

The new DELEG brings together state employees from the Department of Environmental Quality, the Energy Office and the Public Service Commission to work on energy related initiatives. This new office will partner closely with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's tax incentive and business attraction efforts.

"Michigan is uniquely positioned to be a force in renewable energy due to our strength in research and development and highly skilled workforce from the manufacturing industries; advanced energy training at our colleges and universities; as well as our abundance of natural resources," said Pruss. "Our staff is very excited by this unified focus on energy to make Michigan a leader in emerging new energy industries."

DELEG is also home to the Green Jobs workforce initiative as part of Gov. Granholm's No Worker Left Behind (NWLB) which is training workers for high growth industries. Gov. Granholm announced the NWLB initiative on August 1, 2007; an ambitious plan to train 100,000 Michigan citizens in three years for jobs in high demand occupations, emerging industries, or entrepreneurial endeavors. NWLB gives Michigan residents the opportunity to acquire the skills they need to win good-paying jobs in today's global economy. No Worker Left Behind provides up to two years of free tuition at any Michigan community college, university, or other approved training program, for qualifying participants.

As part of the Green Jobs initiative, DELEG is investing \$6 million for green jobs to:

- Increase the number of green industries and businesses in Michigan.

### Working to Create Michigan's Future Today

As part of the departmental changes, a new logo and tagline have been developed to better represent the department's overall direction. Four variations were created by

DELEG graphic designer Gina DiNatale Coon, and staff had the opportunity to choose their favorite.

Out of 1,893 votes cast, the logo shown here was the clear winner. The logo will be used to identify DELEG for years to come.



The new DELEG tagline, voted on by employees in October, is "Working to Create Michigan's Future Today."

- Develop green education and training programs, spurring the growth of Michigan's green economy.
- Invest in worker education and training to prepare our workers for green jobs.
- Support urban renewal by creating green jobs and training opportunities for a diverse mix of people.

Michigan workers interested in pursuing new energy careers can find NWLB approved training programs on the Green Jobs website at [www.michigan.gov/greenjobs](http://www.michigan.gov/greenjobs). For more information about DELEG, visit [www.michigan.gov/deleg](http://www.michigan.gov/deleg).

## IN THIS ISSUE:

2) Director's Message

3) MCB Award Recipients

4) L.I.F.E. Awards

5) Holiday Generosity

8) On the Move

10) Letters and E-mails



Director Pruss recently taped an episode of "Capitol Update" with Rep. Jeff Mayes (D-Bay City) to talk about renewable energy and Gov. Granholm's energy plan for Michigan.

# A Message from the Director

Dear Colleagues,

Happy New Year! I trust that you had a joyous and restful holiday season. It is important that we are well prepared to move forward into 2009, because as you read on the first page, our department has officially taken on a new focus aligning all renewable energy and energy efficiency programs together and adding "Energy" to our name.

Much important and exciting work lies ahead, and it will involve each and every one of you, whether you serve in a workforce development, workplace protection, business service or regulatory capacity. In the coming weeks and months, please watch for updates and additional information on our efforts to make Michigan a national leader in

renewable energy, advanced energy technologies and energy efficiency.

On a separate note, I would like to remind you that January 19 is a state of Michigan holiday celebrating the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As you know, Dr. King (January 15, 1929 – April 4, 1968) was an African American clergyman, activist and prominent leader in the American civil rights movement. His main legacy was to secure progress on civil rights in the United States and he is most often referenced as a human rights icon today.

His "March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom" took place in Washington, D.C., on August 28, 1963. Attended by some 250,000 people, it was the largest demonstration ever seen in the nation's capital, and one of the first to have extensive television coverage. Later this week I'll be sending out an all-staff email with audio and text versions of his inspirational and world-changing message.

As we embark on 2009, I thank each and every one of you for your contributions — not only to the growth and quality of life of our state, but also to the teamwork and quality of our department. I look forward to working with you this year, and I extend my warmest wishes to you for a safe, happy and productive 2009.

*Skip Pruss*

## MICHIGAN LEGWORK

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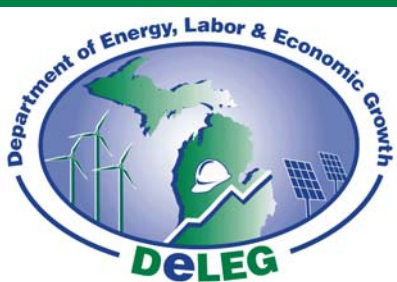
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## Liesl Eichler Clark Joins DELEG as Deputy Director of Energy Systems

Please welcome Liesl Eichler Clark, who joined DELEG on December 1 as the new deputy director of energy systems.



Liesl Clark

Liesl comes to DELEG from Gov. Jennifer Granholm's office where she served as policy advisor for energy, agriculture, environment and natural resources. Previously, she worked at the Department of Agriculture as policy advisor for renewable fuels and as legislative liaison, and she served with the Senate Democratic Caucus as policy advisor of agriculture and environment for the Departments of Agriculture, Environmental Quality and Natural Resources.

Liesl has a Masters in Public Administration from Michigan State University, and a Bachelor of Arts in political economy from MSU's James Madison College. She and her husband John have two boys, Max (age four) and Griffin (age one). In her spare time she enjoys reading, knitting, traveling and spending time with her kids.

# Michigan Commission for the Blind Honor Roll Award

## Recipients Recognized in East Lansing

The Michigan Commission for the Blind (MCB) presented its annual Honor Roll Awards at the MCB Commission Board meeting on December 12 at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing.

The Honor Roll Awards are presented to MCB clients who are exemplary in achieving their goals for employment and/or independent living after vision loss, employers who have excelled in providing employment opportunities for qualified MCB clients, and community partners recognized for their collaboration with MCB in increasing opportunities for MCB clients to achieve independence and/or employment.

The 2008 MCB Honor Roll Award recipients are:

### MCB Clients

**Lula Lane** (64) of **Detroit** described herself as “in a low” a few years ago when she became legally blind and was dealing with major health problems that led to a kidney transplant. She was living with family members at the time, who were cooking for her and reading her mail to her. A couple months after attending a week-long MCB Mini Adjustment Training Seminar to learn skills of blindness for daily living, she moved to her own apartment. Now she does her own cooking and cleaning, and she reads her mail with a magnifying device provided by MCB. Said Lane, “I’m doing good in my own place—I do everything for myself. I’m just so uplifted.”

**Esther Polmanteer** (70) of **Kalamazoo** began experiencing vision loss a few years ago. She gave away her computer, assuming she’d never be able to use it again. When she started receiving training from MCB, she was happy to learn about computer software that reads text out loud. She went to a week-long Mini Adjustment Seminar, where, in her words, MCB staff “gave me the information I needed so I could adjust.” Since then, she’s purchased a new computer. She describes the training she’s received from MCB as learning “how to do things in a different way.” With her new skills, she goes shopping using public transportation, organizes recreational and entertainment activities for the residents of her building, and volunteers at a local preschool twice a month.

**Dale Layer** (42) of **St. Clair Shores** is both deaf and blind, having experienced progressive hearing and vision loss. Previously, he had worked as a truck driver for many years, but he needed a new career to support his family. Over the course of his involvement with MCB, he received training in food service entrepreneurship through the Business Enterprise Program. He currently operates a vending machine route in the central part of the state, and has provided job shadowing opportunities to newcomers in the program.

**Kim Munro** (26) of **Lansing** began to receive services from MCB in 2004 when she was a high school student. She attended the residential MCB Training Center in Kalamazoo, where she received training in skills of blindness and computers. During her search for employment, she volunteered at the Capital Area Center for Independent Living and Peckham Vocational Industries. She now works full-time at Peckham processing employee payroll and doing mailings. Munro also faces challenges as a wheelchair user, and she has encountered many barriers to employment—but not enough to stop her from achieving her goals.

**Gamaliel Soto** (42) of **Holland** contacted MCB for assistance in finding employment. He went to the residential MCB Training Center in Kalamazoo to update his computer skills and skills of blindness. He says, “The training center is a wonderful place where people can learn and be encouraged.” He now works for the local transportation system—scheduling rides for customers including those with disabilities—where his ability to speak both Spanish and English is a tremendous asset. Soto says, “I appreciate the chance to show my abilities and skills.”

### Employers

**Grand River Gastroenterology** of **Grand Rapids** has embraced the belief that individuals with visual impairments can do a quality job. Although the office manager, Tina Kortz, had some misgivings at first, she’s very pleased with the work of the MCB client hired, which includes mailing information to patients, filing, and other duties, up to 20 hours per week. The employee’s work responsibilities have increased over time, and Grand River Gastroenterology has a valuable employee who is an asset to the business.

(Continued on Page 7)



Lula Lane



Esther Polmanteer



Dale Layer



Kim Munro



Gamaliel Soto



Attorney George Sinas (left) talks with Automobile and Home Insurance Consumer Advocate Butch Hollowell on the first episode of Insurance 101.

## First Episode of Insurance 101 Ready to Air

Michigan's Automobile and Home Insurance Advocate Butch Hollowell recently completed taping of the first two episodes of his new cable show, "Insurance 101 with Butch Hollowell." The show, produced by DELEG's Division of Media Technology, is aimed at educating consumers about automobile and home insurance issues. The 30-minute show explains confusing insurance terms in plain language, answers individual consumers' insurance-related questions, and provides viewers with helpful tips and tools so that they are well-prepared to buy the best insurance coverage for the money.

The first episode features two guests – Office of Financial and Insurance Regulation (OFIR) Commissioner Ken Ross, who gave an overview of OFIR and its responsibilities, and attorney George Sinas, who explained no-fault insurance.

Insurance 101 will be released to more than 80 cable stations statewide and is expected to run multiple times throughout each month. New shows will be produced monthly. Check local listings for air dates and times.

## Learning Independence from Experience (L.I.F.E.) Conference Helps Special Education Students

By Terry Johnson, MRS

The Learning Independence From Experience (L.I.F.E.) Conference has become an annual event for high school special education students across the five county area surrounding Grand Traverse Bay. It's the result of a partnership between MRS, Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District (TBA-ISD), and Disability Network - Northern Michigan for the purpose of providing transition services. The conference goal is to present topics relevant to post-secondary education, community participation, employment, and independent living and to replicate a conference experience. The conference experience includes a keynote presenter, breakout sessions, lunch, and evaluations. As a bonus, some schools made a whole day of it by staying to enjoy the water park inside the Great Wolf Lodge.

Bill Columbo, MRS Traverse City Office, partnered with Michigan Association of Rehabilitation Organizations (MARO), TBA-ISD, and Disability Network to bring speaker, Peggy O'Neill to the area for the Michigan Rehabilitation Conference as the keynote speaker at the awards dinner. The shared costs enabled many people to benefit. The L.I.F.E. Conference was held at the same time as the Michigan Rehabilitation Conference, so Peggy was able to keynote at the L.I.F.E. Conference. Peggy shared stories of personal challenges and triumphs in life as a little person of 3'8" tall. Most students easily identified with her and recognized her message of embracing differences.



Eva Gross (left) and Karen Towne pose with some of the teacups Karen brought in for a holiday tea luncheon hosted by Deputy Director Susan Corbin.

## Tea Time in the Executive Office

Deputy Director Susan Corbin recently invited the managers in the bureaus and agencies she supervises to a holiday tea and luncheon following the quarterly managers meeting. Guests enjoyed finger sandwiches, cookies and other treats, as well as tea.

Teacups were provided by Karen Towne, senior executive assistant to Susan, whose mother-in-law, Lorraine Towne, has collected teacups dating back to the late 1800's. There were about 50 teacups from countries such as Prussia, Occupied Japan and Unoccupied Japan, England, Germany, and the U.S. Additional service pieces included creamers, sugar bowls, serving plates in Depression glass, Candlewicking, or various forms of hand painted china. The collection began with Lorraine's grandmother and has been handed down from mother to daughter since.

# Doug Daligga Celebrates 30 Years with MES Board of Review

By Elaine Pohl, MES Board of Review

Doug Daligga, director of the MES Board of Review, was completely, but pleasantly, surprised by a celebration on January 7, which marked the 30th anniversary date of his employment with the Board. After a brief stint as an unemployment referee, Doug was hired as a staff attorney at the Board in 1979 and became Director in 1985.

During his tenure, the Board has been in four locations – one in Detroit and three in Lansing. He has served 10 different board chairs. Board staff have only praise for Doug's leadership. He is consistently equitable and tactful in supervising staff. He is unflappable in crisis situations which is

especially helpful in these economic times, when unemployment appeals to the Board are increasing.

Moreover, Doug's extensive knowledge of unemployment law is a huge asset to the Board, and he always makes time to discuss the finer points of the law with Board members and staff attorneys. He claims he has one of the best jobs in state government, due in large part to his enjoyable co-workers who keep him sane and/or make life interesting. His concluding words: "Let's eat!"

Thank you Doug, and we hope you don't retire anytime soon.



Board members gather with Doug Daligga at a party honoring his anniversary with the MES Board of Review (from left): board member Marlene Jobe, board member Charlotte Duncil, Board Chair Amy Rosenberg, Director (and guest of honor) R. Douglas Daligga, board member Mark Kaufmann, and board member Neal Young. In the photo at right, Doug displays his anniversary plaque with his secretary Elaine Pohl and Amy Rosenberg.



## Michigan Rehabilitation Services Staff Receive Awards

By Terry Johnson, MRS

**Karsten Bekemeier**, rehabilitation counselor, MRS Jackson Office, received the 2008 Counselor of the Year award from the Michigan Counselors and Educators Association. He was then nominated for the national award and became the National Rehabilitation Counselors and Educator's Association 2008 Counselor of the Year. He was nominated for Counselor of the Year because he has a true passion for understanding people and a desire to assist them in creating solutions for their own lives. He received the award October 24 at the National Rehabilitation Association's annual conference in St. Louis, MO.

**Andrea Tolle**, MRS deputy division director, policy and business services/Southeast Division, and **Venita King**, site manager, MRS Oak Park Office, Oakland District both received a Michigan Rehabilitation Conference "Excellence in Rehabilitation" award.

Andrea's list of accomplishments is long and reflects a commitment to the identification of service gaps, a strategy for bringing together stakeholders who can bridge those gaps and the tenacity to see a project through to fruition.

Venita has maintained the highest professional standards and always put the customer at the center of work. She is recognized for her willingness to collaborate on programs that represented a significant paradigm shift at that time. Andrea and Venita both received their awards at the Michigan Rehabilitation Conference on November 6 in Traverse City.



Venita King (l.) and Andrea Tolle



Making Christmas bright: MIOSHA volunteers wrap the mountain of presents donated by staff for an area family.

## MIOSHA Demonstrates Generosity with Adopt-A-Family Christmas Celebration

By Judith Shane and Katie Benghauser, MIOSHA

Whew! There was a flurry of activity but we pulled it off again! Gifts were purchased, lists checked twice, packages wrapped, and grocery bags filled for the MIOSHA Adopt-A-Family. It took a car and two vans to deliver everything to a very appreciative mom on Wednesday, December 17!

Each year MIOSHA participates in the Salvation Army's Adopt-A-Family Christmas gift-giving program. The families are chosen by the Salvation Army and meet their income requirements to receive Christmas assistance. This year "MIOSHA's Family" was a single mother, with six children ranging in age from nine months to 15 years old.

MIOSHA starts the fundraising with a one-day "Christmas in July" raffle for a Christmas goodie basket. This grows in success every year – raising almost \$200 in 2008. MIOSHA also donates \$100 from our continuing "Casual

Wednesday" donation funds that goes towards the grocery shopping each year.

At Thanksgiving we kick off the gift giving with a specific list of toys and clothing for each child. MIOSHA staff shopped for the children and collected money for food and other goodies for the family. Although the mother requested no gifts for herself, we also made a special basket for her.

MIOSHA is privileged each year to share our Christmas with a family experiencing economic difficulties. Thanks so much to everyone who contributed gifts, money, and time, and a special thank you to coordinators Debbie Merryfield and Paula VanderMoere for doing a great job of making it a holiday to remember for six children.

## Wage & Hour Helps Others for the Holidays



With the state going through tough economic times, Wage & Hour staff decided that rather than exchange gifts with their co-workers they would donate money toward the purchase of toys for the Toys for Tots program and make a cash contribution to the Salvation Army. Wage & Hour staff who contributed to the Division's holiday donations are: (front, l-r): Nicole Daniel, Linda Swanson, Wendy Beam, Georgia Harris, Allen Evans, Adam Sandoval; (back, l-r): Lasha Murray, Amanda Randles, Angelina Kolm, Jill Hookey, Brian Brownell, Joe Valu, Jason Koontz, Kim Wright, Jennifer Fields. Not pictured are: Michele Betz, Jack Finn, Catherine Moricz, Maria Ortiz and John Stadel.

**Lakestate Industries of Escanaba** worked together with MCB to place an MCB client in a receptionist job, a situation that has proven mutually beneficial to both employee and employer. After a two-week evaluation with the potential to be hired, the MCB client was hired and Executive Director Cheryl Ohman says, "She's very valuable to us. She does filing, pay sheets, and more—a variety of work." Safety Coordinator Jim Vicenzi accepted the award on behalf of Lakestate Industries, and, thanking the commission, expressed the value of considering individuals for employment based on their abilities rather than their disabilities.

## Community Partners

**Dr. Walter Betts of Big Rapids** was honored posthumously for his exemplary partnership with the commission and its clients. At Ferris State University, he was director of the Low Vision Clinic and taught in the areas of ocular disease and low vision. He had hosted MCB Director Patrick Cannon and other MCB staff in advanced optometry classes for the past several years, helping to make future optometrists aware of the importance of blind rehabilitation and the services available from MCB. Dr. Sarah Hinkley, director of the Ferris State University Low Vision Clinic, accepted the award on behalf of Dr. Betts' family.

**MTB Rehabilitation Services of Leslie** has worked with MCB to provide clients with appropriate adaptive software and equipment recommendations. Owner Matthew Brink said he appreciates the opportunity to work with "dedicated, hard-working MCB staff, clients who are eager to work, and employers willing to work with individuals who use skills and technology obtained through rehabilitation to reach their potential." Said one client, "Matt is a very outstanding professional and counselor. He assessed my needs and provided the right adaptive equipment and training so I could keep my job." Four Michigan Commission for the Blind staff members individually recommended MTB Rehabilitation Services for this award.

**New Horizons of Auburn Hills** has stepped forward as a strong partner in rehabilitation, installing adaptive equipment in their clerical training module, securing a United Way grant in cooperation with the Macomb Intermediate School District to provide a cash match for a rehabilitation assistant to provide transition services, and collaborating with MCB and other partners in developing a job readiness skills training program that has received national recognition. During the past fiscal year, New Horizons has helped approximately 500 individuals with disabilities to achieve employment. Accepting the award were President and CEO Stan Gramke (right) and Vice President Ron Storing.



Jim Vicenzi



Dr. Sarah Hinkley



Matthew Brink



Ron Storing and Stan Gramke

## Nigerian Officials Visit Public Service Commission

The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) hosted a delegation of regulatory officials from the Federal Republic of Nigeria for a week in December.

Through the sponsorship of the United States Agency for International Development and the joint efforts of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, the Nigerian Electric Regulatory Commission (NERC) and the MPSC, the NERC and the MPSC entered into a partnership for the exchange of experience and information.

During their week in Michigan, the Nigerians toured utility facilities in Michigan and met with MPSC Commissioners and utility representatives.

MPSC staffers also got to know the Nigerians on an informal basis during a potluck lunch they hosted for the delegation.

In July, MPSC Chairman Orjiakor Isiogu and two MPSC staffers traveled

to Abuja, Nigeria as part of the exchange program.

Nigeria is in the process of transitioning from a nationalized system to a privatized system.



Nigerian officials visit MPSC (from left to right): Prof. C. Iloeje, Dr. Grace Eyoma, Hon. Ransome Owan, MPSC Chairman Orjiakor Isiogu, and Dr. Alimi Abdul Razaq.



## On the Move

### Energy Office Welcomes Two New Staffers

Please welcome two new employees in DELEG's Energy Office:

**Jessica Claire Williams** has joined the Energy Office as the new energy efficiency analyst. Jessica comes to DELEG from an environmental, engineering, and architectural firm in Dallas where she worked as an architectural historian and building pathologist under contract for the U.S. Army. She has diligently analyzed environmental sustainability and energy efficiency in conjunction with historic preservation as a tool for economic revitalization and brings a diverse background of preservation public policy knowledge and leadership skills. She has a graduate degree in Historic Preservation from Eastern Michigan University, a bachelor's degree in business economics from Ohio University, and an associate's degree in hands-on building preservation and restoration technology from Belmont Technical College in Ohio. In her spare time, Jessica enjoys enhancing her cooking abilities by watching the Food Network channel, shopping at antique stores for period furniture, and



Jessica Williams (left) and Tania Howard

traveling to visit her family in her home state of West Virginia.

**Tania Howard** joined the Energy Office in November as the biomass energy program coordinator. Previously, she held positions as an outdoor environmental educator at YMCA Storer Camps in Jackson and as a biological science technician for the ecological restoration program at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. She is looking forward to using her environmental

background as a tool in furthering the alternative energy field. She also worked as a student assistant for the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) in the Remediation and Redevelopment Division in Grand Rapids. She graduated from Grand Valley State University in April 2007 with a Bachelor of Science in Natural Resource Management. In her spare time, she is a singer/songwriter and plays guitar and keyboard. Her most recent accomplishments were cutting a rough demo CD and performing at open mic nights at local venues. She is also an accomplished tennis player.



Back row: (left-right) Gretchen Ostrander, Matt Hartmann, Fontella Smith, Phylis Manning, Onita Coleman, Cathy Latocki, Evaett Webb, Karie Clayton, Kelly McIntosh, Danielle Darnell, Kimberly Dietrich, and Gina Hall. Middle row: (left -right) Martha Kinsman, Amy Doran, Donald Humes, Wyketha Jackson, Melody Watson, Bethany Frollo and Lilia Lynch. Front row seated: (left -right) Sue Berg, Bernadette McCracklin, Stella Cortez, Scot Theakston and Andrea Flores.

## Saginaw RICC Welcomes

### 24 New UIA Hires

By Anne Marie Havercamp, Saginaw RICC

The Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) recently welcomed 24 new employees at its Saginaw Remote Initial Claims Center. The new hires were split into two groups of 12 for their training. Both groups are great. They are energetic, willing to participate and eager to learn. In "New Hire" training, they are learning 36 modules over the course of seven weeks, and they will be filling up two 4" binders with resources information. The material was created and written by module writers in UIA's Center for Learning & Development.

The new employees have a lot of material to absorb, but they have said that hands-on activities, along with being able to work on the computers, have helped the learning process. They continue to express their happiness about being with the agency, and we're happy to have them.

# On the Move

## Yvette Leonard Says Farewell

Yvette Leonard, a Civil Service human resources manager who oversaw human resource issues for UIA and for other DLEG programs at Cadillac Place, has left her post at Cadillac Place and is heading south to North Carolina.

Yvette is leaving the state to become the recruitment manager for Durham County government. In her new job, she will be responsible for all county government hiring. Durham County has a workforce of 1,800 people.



Yvette Leonard poses for one final photo with her HR staff (l-r) Charlette Byrd, HR analyst; Harold Lewis, HR analyst; Yvette; Sabrina Witherspoon, personnel management analyst; and Marilyn Smith, labor relations officer.

## Frankie Henderson Investigates Retirement

Throughout her career in state government, Frankie Henderson was an investigator. Whether it was with the Department of Agriculture, the unemployment insurance program or the Department of Social Services (DSS), Frankie was always looking into things to be sure that people didn't beat the system.

Frankie ended her 25-year career at the Unemployment Insurance Agency and her 32-year career in state government when she retired in November.

At the time of her retirement, Frankie was a senior investigator with UIA's Benefit Fraud Investigations Unit, based at Cadillac Place. She oversaw the investigators and the unit's more complex investigations, as well as internal investigations.

Frankie's crime busting career began when she earned her bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Wayne State University and then joined the Detroit Police Department for two years.

In retirement, Frankie said she plans to continue working a bit longer. She'll be joining H&R Block during the coming tax season, helping people with their tax returns. She may also do some UI consulting. On the fun side, she expects to find time for reading, traveling, and visiting relatives.



Frankie Henderson



# On the Move

## John Groen Joins BWT as Communications Representative

Welcome to John Groen, who has joined DELEG as a communications representative working with Deputy Director Andy Levin on major workforce initiatives. In his new position, John will focus on helping devise and implement communications strategies for several key initiatives, including No Worker Left Behind, Green Jobs, the transformation of adult learning in Michigan, and any energy efficiency or weatherization training we may launch in 2009. In that capacity, he will work closely with DELEG's communications shop and bureaus, the governor's office and sister departments. John comes from the Michigan Democratic Party, where he served as research director and communications assistant. John is skilled at developing communications strategies, organizing press conferences and special events, and dealing with the media. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Michigan State University and is currently working on his Masters of Business Administration from Wayne State University.



John Groen

## Pat Bialek Retires from Wage & Hour

Pat Bialek, a regulation agent with the Wage and Hour Division, retired in December. Pat was new to state government when she joined the Division in 1992. Prior to becoming a state employee, she had worked in payroll at the Palace of Auburn Hills.

Pat was honored for her 16 years with the division at the Wage & Hour annual meeting in December.



Pat Bialek (left) poses with her daughter Ginger and granddaughter Samantha.

## Quenten Yoder Retires from MIOSHA

By Connie O'Neill, MIOSHA

Quenten Yoder joined the MIOSHA program in 1985, and served as a senior occupational safety consultant in Southwest Michigan. Quenten provided hundreds of training programs, workshops, and seminars on MIOSHA standards, and assisted employers with developing safety and health management systems — all for the protection of Michigan workers. The CET Division celebrated the retirement of Quenten Yoder at their division meeting on December 16 at the Lansing Area Safety Council.

During the celebration, Quenten was reminded of several significant accomplishments, such as his work on developing a seminar for facility maintenance personnel and the "Blue Print for Safety and Health" seminar. Quenten was frequently observed wearing a vest while conducting work activities. In his honor, many staff wore vests to the meeting. Quenten is looking forward to pursuing his love of history, reading, wildlife, spending time with family and friends, and remaining active in his community and church. We wish him the very best and will miss him!



CET Division staff wore their vests in honor of Quenten's retirement. Quenten is the third person from the left in the back row.

# We Get Letters ... and E-mails!

*We all know DELEG is filled with employees who go above and beyond the call of duty every day, but often we never hear about it. If you or someone you work with has received a phone call, e-mail, or letter of praise for exceptional customer service, please forward it to LEGwork editor Kathy Fagan, who will make sure it appears on the "We Get Letters and E-mails" page of the next issue. This is your chance to blow your own horn or recognize a co-worker for a job well done!*

*Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) Director Jaye Shamsiddeen passed along two letters praising her employees. The following was in appreciation for the efforts of rehabilitation counselor Deborah Bradley:*

I am writing this letter to express my gratitude and appreciation of the services provided to me by Michigan Rehabilitation Services. I am a recent college graduate with a Bachelors of Science degree. This would not have been at all possible without the help of a few great people within your organization. I was first introduced to MRS in 2003, where I met rehab counselor, Deborah Bradley, located at the Grand River Office in Detroit, MI. My initial interview with Ms. Bradley was very warm and very informative. She was straight forward, and very clear of her expectations of me. Ms. Bradley stressed the importance of me taking full advantage of the services being offered. Before meeting Ms. Bradley, I struggled with self esteem issues and identifying my purpose in life. I had no idea what I wanted to do career wise. I felt lost and misunderstood.... With the support of Ms. Bradley and my own determination, I have accomplished so much in the past five years. I have a great job that offers great benefits, stability and career advancement opportunities, along with a degree that will enable me to pursue my career goals even further.

Michigan Rehabilitation Services gave me opportunities I never thought would be possible. I am a success story because of the people within your organization like Deborah Bradley. I cannot thank you enough for all that has been done!

*Jaye also received a letter from the Council of Baptist Pastors of Detroit and Vicinity praising the efforts of Donald Hill, district manager of the MRS Detroit Office:*

The Council has established the Council of Baptist Pastors' Substance Abuse Program (BAPC), a Prison Ministry Project and an Educational and Training arm that support opportunities to its constituents. Mr. Hill keeps abreast of Council activities and provides The Council with necessary information to keep us alert to what is happening in our community....

Mr. Hill has generated programs and resources to aid local Detroit-Wayne County residents who have disabilities. Mr. Hill over the years has dedicated himself to giving those who have disabilities an equal opportunity to jobs, educational opportunities,

training and care that would allow those with special needs to become viable and productive citizens of their communities.

.....  
*Jim Spaulding, a mediator in the Lansing office of the Bureau of Employment Relations/MERC, received the following letter of appreciation:*

Jim,  
Thank you for the excellent training on the collaborative bargaining process you provided the Holland Board of Public Works and the BPW Utilityworker Local bargaining committee. Your style was both engaging and authoritative — due in no small part to the credibility you quickly built with both union and management while describing your background working on both "sides of the table." The pace of the training was just right. We covered a lot of ground in about 10 hours, but never felt rushed.

We will begin using the collaborative bargaining process this Thursday morning, with a total of four half-day sessions scheduled before Christmas. While I'm sure our renewal discussions won't be entirely free of potholes and speed bumps, I'm very confident that we couldn't have received a more timely or concise preparation for this process than what you provided last Thursday and Friday.

Sincerely,

Jon Hofman, Human Resources Manager  
Holland Board of Public Works

.....  
*Beth Courtney, unemployment insurance examiner in the Unemployment Insurance Agency in Grand Rapids, received these words of thanks from a client:*

Beth,  
Thank you so much for the time you took to straighten out my mess! After so many phone calls and endless hours on hold I am thankful I finally by chance got connected to you, you are a true professional at your job. I have to say as a person who has been in business for myself and has worked in customer service I value an individual such as you who takes pride in their job and remembers what you are there for, to help people like me and not just collect a paycheck. It seems this is becoming a rare quality and it is good to know there are still people like you who possess it. I spoke to Lisa in our human resource dept. after we were through and she was also very impressed and was grateful for your assistance.

